



File Code: 1950

Date: December 10, 2013

Subject: 2013 Monitoring & Evaluation Report - Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project

To: Interested Party

On December 10, 2012, the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Mountain Pine Beetle Response (PBR) Project was signed. As an adaptive project, the PBR Project provides a timely and effective response in responding to mountain pine beetle (MPB) outbreaks to reduce hazardous fuels, and evaluate and learn from on-going actions. Given the dynamic nature of a MPB infestation it allows resource professionals to work closely with nature, the flexibility to anticipate and respond with a suite of techniques available and prioritize to be in the right places at the right time.

This is the annual monitoring and evaluation report (Fiscal Year 2013) for the Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project. This report contains sections on the monitoring items developed by the Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) for their resource based on the analysis of the PBR Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), ROD, and Specialist Implementation Field Guides. This report includes findings on the effectiveness of treatments and conservation measures and recommendations for changes, if needed. If monitoring finds resource protection objectives are not being achieved, then:

- Vegetation treatment operations can be modified or reduced and/or
- Resource protection measures can be improved or changed
- Monitoring to determine the source of impact and apply appropriate mitigation can be improved or increased.

All activities completed and initiated in Fiscal Year 2013 were consistent with the ROD and the EIS analysis. Two resource areas identified a need to adapt treatments and/or design criteria to better implement the ROD. These recommendations are consistent with the ROD and EIS (see Hydrology / Fisheries/Soils and Wildlife sections). With one activity completed in FY13, implementation and effectiveness monitoring is insufficient for many resources to recommend modification(s) of treatments and/or design criteria.

Adaptive management in the PBR Project focuses on learning and adapting, through partnerships of managers, scientists, and other stakeholders who learn together how to create and maintain sustainable ecosystems. I have reviewed the two adaptations regarding Hydrology and Wildlife and concur with the recommendations to incorporate these changes on subsequent PBR activities. As PBR activities are implemented, the interdisciplinary team will continue monitoring outcomes to advance scientific understanding (e.g. new science or new considerations) and help adjust policies or operations as part of an iterative learning process to make recommendations and guide future actions.



If you have questions, comments or need further information, contact me or Katie Van Alstyne at the Forest Supervisor's Office, Custer, South Dakota at (605) 673.9200.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Bobzien", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

CRAIG BOBZIEN
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure:
Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project
Monitoring Report - Fiscal Year 2013

cc: Katie Van-Alstyne